

Remarks

Applicants have amended the above-indicated claims to present the claims in what is believed to be allowable condition. Allowance of all of the claims is respectfully requested.

New Claim 21 includes all of the features found in former Claim 16 which was indicated, in the Office Action dated June 10, 2004, as being allowable if written in independent form.

The Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter is added.

The present invention is a toothbrush with tufting holes which are formed in a tufting part being elliptic or rectangular, and a lengthwise direction of the tufting holes being along the direction of the handle length. The tufting holes are inclined, in directions perpendicular to lengthwise directions of the handle length, toward a tufting surface so as to have tufts implanted therein support one another. The inclination from a vertical direction of inclined tufting holes is 2 to 10°. An anchor that is driven into a tufting base in a folded part of the tuft that has been folded in a center in its lengthwise direction is driven into the tufting hole so that it is almost parallel to a center line along a lengthwise direction of the tufting hole within a range of ±10°. An opening surface area of the tufting hole is divided into two equal parts in order to embed and support the tufts in the tufting hole. There are a plurality of converging blocks of a pair of two tufts facing and supporting one another by being implanted in the tufting holes. An end portion of each tuft that has been implanted is worked into a V-shape, inclined faces of which intersect in an angular peak directed in the direction in which the tufts support one another.

Regarding Claim 1, it is respectfully submitted that none of the previously cited references disclose or suggest the claimed toothbrush. Specifically, Claim 1 recites “an anchor that is driven into a tufting base in a folded part of the tuft that has been folded in a center in its lengthwise direction is driven into the tufting hole so that it is almost parallel to a center line along a lengthwise

direction of the tufting holes within a range of $\pm 10^\circ$ and an opening surface area of the tufting hole is divided into two equal parts in order to embed and support said tufts in the tufting hole.” It is respectfully submitted that none of the previously cited references disclose or suggest such feature. It has been alleged in earlier Office Actions that Chen et al. (5,590,438) discloses such feature, however, it is respectfully submitted that such feature is not found in Chen. Referring to Figs. 6-11, which were referred to in an earlier Office Action, only Figs. 8 and 10 show a tufting hole having a lengthwise direction, and in the embodiments of Figs. 8 and 10 the anchors, 48 and 68 respectively, are at approximately 90° to a center line along a lengthwise direction of each tufting hole. Thus, Chen teaches away from an anchor being almost parallel to a center line along a lengthwise direction of the tufting hole.

Further, in Claim 1, it is now recited that “there are a plurality of converging blocks of a pair of two tufts facing and supporting one another by being implanted in the tufting holes, and an end portion of each tuft that has been implanted is worked into a V-shape, inclined faces of which intersect in an angular peak directed in the direction in which said tufts support one another.” Support for this feature of the claimed toothbrush is found on page 21, lines 20-24 of the present specification.

It has been alleged in earlier Office Actions that Crawford (2,040,245) discloses tufts worked into a V-shape. However, the presently claimed V-shape is distinct from the V-shape shown by Crawford. As best viewed in Fig. 2 of the present application, the presently claimed toothbrush has an end portion of each tuft worked into a V-shape and inclined faces of each tuft intersect in an angular peak. The angular peak is in the same direction as the direction in which tufts, of a pair of tufts, support one another. As shown in present Fig. 2, the direction referred to is perpendicular to

the lengthwise direction of the toothbrush handle.

In the toothbrush of Crawford, as described at column 3, lines 8-10, tufts 12 combine at their extremities in each pair, thus forming a conical application extremity. Crawford does not disclose or suggest faces of a V-shaped tuft intersecting to form an angular peak, which has a direction associated with it. The conical shape of the tufts of Crawford terminate in a "dot", not in a "line" which has a direction, as in the present claimed invention.

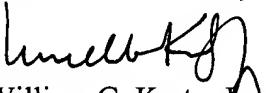
It is believed that Claims 1, 5, 8, 9, 12-15, and 21 are now in condition for allowance. Allowance of Claims 1, 5, 8, 9, 12-15, and 21 is respectfully requested.

If there are any issues of a minor nature remaining, the Examiner is urged to contact Applicants' attorney, the undersigned, at Area Code (202) 659-2930.

In the event that any fees are due in connection with this paper, please charge our Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

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